

REMARKS

Claims 1-53 are pending. Claims 1, 3-11, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29-32, 35-37, 43, 50 and 52 have been amended. No new matter is presented.

Claims 1-18, 22-46 and 50-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Herz. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites “modifying said cluster structure by a user according to user knowledge and preferences.” Thus, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the user controls how the target objects are organized into clusters by modifying the cluster structure. The remaining independent claims have been amended in a similar manner to clarify that the user controls which clusters will be created, how the clusters are labeled, which clusters will be merged and which will be split, etc. Thereby, a user can indicate (and thus have control over) how the target objects should be organized through personalizing/modifying the cluster structure.

In contrast, Herz discloses that relevance feedback is given for filtering target objects and it is performed before the clustering process. Thus relevance feedback is not used to control how the target objects are organized into clusters. Specifically, a user would have no control over how the target objects are to be organized into the cluster structure, which is generated automatically through the hierarchical clustering algorithm. Although Herz discloses creating at least one new information cluster, labeling each information cluster, merging, and splitting of clusters, all these are provided as part of the automatic hierarchical clustering process, which is not directed by a user. Once again, relevance feedback happens before clustering and Herz does not teach how relevance feedback can be used to create a new user-defined information cluster, label a user-chosen cluster with a user-defined symbol, merge two or more user-chosen clusters, and split a user-chosen cluster, according to the user’s preferences. Thus, Herz does not disclose the features recited in the independent claims. Accordingly, Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments to the claims be entered in this after-final response because they merely clarify the invention as already claimed and do not require any additional search and/or substantive consideration.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 455392001200.

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Respectfully submitted,

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